

**WORKING WITH
MINAS BASIN WATERSHED
COMMUNITY GROUPS**

SUMMARY REPORT

**Prepared by
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of the**

**Minas Basin Working Group
Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership**



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- ◆ Friends of Avon River (FAR)
- ◆ Valley Watershed Stewardship Association (VWSA)
- ◆ Avon River Watershed Coalition (ARWC)
- ◆ Wildlife Habitat Advocates (WHA)
- ◆ Coastal Issues Committee, Ecology Action Centre (EAC)
- ◆ Chateau Villager's Property Owner's Association
- ◆ NS Community Volunteer Initiative
- ◆ Friends of Cornwallis River Society (FCRS)
- ◆ Kings Heritage Connection (KHC)
- ◆ West Hants Historical Society (WHHS)
- ◆ Colchester Trails Association (CTA)
- ◆ Hants West Wildlife Associates (HWWA)
- ◆ Clean Annapolis River Project (CARP)
- ◆ Blomidon Naturalists Society (BNS)
- ◆ Hantsport and Area Historical Society (HAHS)
- ◆ Cobequid Salmon Association (CSA)
- ◆ Nova Forest Alliance (NFA)
- ◆ Citizens Action to Protect the Environment (CAPE)
- ◆ Parrsboro Groundfish Group
- ◆ Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre (s)
- ◆ Coastal Communities Initiative (CCI)
- ◆ Falmouth Watershed Committee

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- ◆ The Minas Basin Working Group and its members for their efforts in conservation of the Minas Basin Watershed.
- ◆ Mike Brylinsky for his guidance, support, and input into working with community groups and in this final report.
- ◆ Maxine Westhead for her knowledge and support as well as her readiness to assist with comments and suggestions.
- ◆ Justin Huston for his input on the original outline of the document.
- ◆ Jon Percy for making a section on the website where community groups may post their meeting information.

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2003, the Minas Basin Working Group hosted a number of community forums. (Willcocks-Musselman, R. *Planning for Action in the Minas Basin Watershed*. Technical Report # 2, 2003). The Working Group implemented a work plan to address the issues that were identified by individuals and community groups throughout the community forums held in the Minas Basin Watershed Area. After the success of the *Planning for Action Workshops* held in Wolfville, Truro, and Parrsboro in 2002, the Minas Basin Working Group received funding from the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans for the next step of hiring a coordinator to work with community groups to develop action plans for the Minas Basin Watershed.

Lisa McCuaig was hired as the Minas Basin Working Group Coordinator from July 15, 2003 until January 15, 2004 with the following contract objectives (in order of priority):

- ◆ **aid** community groups in developing **Action Plans**
- ◆ **assist** community groups in organizing **workshops** and **meetings**
- ◆ **foster networking** and **liaison** among community groups and other interested parties
- ◆ **assess** available funding opportunities and to seek **funds** for future projects

1.1 The Tangible Achievements

Presentations (22)

The coordinator presented a 10 minute introduction on the Minas Basin Working Group and detailed the coordinator's objectives to 22 groups located within the Minas Basin Watershed. The primary purpose of these meetings was to introduce the community group to the coordinator and also to introduce the Minas Basin Working Group's Coordinator and contract objectives to the community group.

During these presentations the coordinator let the community groups know that she was available to work with community groups in developing their action plans. A secondary purpose of these "in person meetings" was to develop a long term relationship with community groups doing restoration or preservation of the resources within the Minas Basin Watershed.

The results of these meetings included development of partnerships with community groups within the Minas Basin Watershed and increased capacity building by developing positive and trusting relationship with community groups.

The coordinator remained unbiased so as not to influence the group to do things in a particular way and let the group develop naturally, without attempting to change or improve a group's decision. In the coordinator's opinion, part of the group's sustainable development is to attempt things with the possibility of success and / or failure.

Throughout the presentations delivered to community groups, the Minas Basin Working Group has been portrayed as a separate and distinct group from the Marine Biosphere Initiative.

Website Location

The coordinator arranged to have a website location (community@bofep.org) where the groups could post their community information. Groups identified a need to have a central location where they could see what meetings were upcoming, find out when other groups were having workshops and meetings, and be better able to plan their special functions. Thank you to Jon Percy for setting this up on the Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership website. At present community groups are using the site to post their workshop / meeting information.

Compilation of Mandate and Mission Statements

Twenty – two mandates, mission statements, and / or action plans have been collected and compiled in Appendix C of the full report. The purpose of having them together in this document is for community groups, managers, and scientists to have a better understanding of the overall picture of the work that is being completed within the Minas Basin Watershed Area. One Action Plan was developed during the course of the contract and the rest were already in place. The coordinator met and worked with the Colchester Trails Association in development of their Five Year Management Plan.

Board Involvement

The coordinator represented the Minas Basin Working Group on two boards during the course of this contract. They include the Avon River Watershed Coalition and the Valley Watershed Stewardship Association.

Database

The Minas Basin Database of community groups and contacts was updated with current information. A copy has been given to Amanda Tree, BoFEP, to keep on file and for future reference.

1.2 The major achievements include (immeasurable)

The coordinator followed up requests made by community groups for information, research, or funding. She answered questions from the Central Nova Scotia Tourism Association regarding the area that the Minas Basin entails.

The coordinator researched information on the Avon River Causeway / Windsor Causeway issue and provided it to the Friends of Avon River. Also she advised the Friends of Avon River on how to hold meetings and where to locate resources.

The coordinator provided the Environment Canada Funding Book to both the Colchester Trails Association and the Cobequid Salmon Association. She also attempted to link similar groups together to work on projects like the Cobequid Salmon Association and the Colchester Trails Association.

The coordinator brought suggestions forward from the Farm Mentorship Program and arranged a meeting to discuss how both groups could help one another.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

In October 2002, the Minas Basin Working Group of the Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership developed a *Strategic Work Plan* for 2002 / 2003. The mission was "*to maintain and enhance environmental quality in the Minas Basin and its watershed, and to allow for sustainable resource use by existing and future generations.*"

To advance the Mission Statement identified for 2003, the Minas Basin Working Group decided "*to actively pursue the following objectives:*"

- ◆ **Identify Community Issues** - *Engage the public in identifying issues and actions pertaining to the sustainability of the Basin's resources and its coastal communities (i.e. encourage active community participation in all aspects of the Working Group's activities.*
- ◆ **Facilitate Partnerships and Collaboration** – *Facilitate partnerships, collaboration and new funding opportunities among researchers, policy makers, resource managers and community groups pertaining to any aspect of the sustainable use and management of the Minas Basin.*
- ◆ **Develop and Facilitate Implementation of Integrated Management Plans** – *To work towards a multistakeholder-supported, integrated management plan for the Minas Basin, taking into account its natural resources (living and non-living), the needs for conservation and protection, and Canada's long-term commitment to sustainable development.*
- ◆ **Enhance Communication and Information Exchange** - *Enhance access to and interpretation of information on the Minas Basin and its natural resources.*
- ◆ **Identify Research Priorities** – *Identify emerging environmental issues and trends of importance to the Minas Basin watershed and its communities. To address research priorities, the Working Group will establish sub-committees, such as the existing Habitat Sub-Committee.*
- ◆ **Identify Habitat Issues** – *Facilitate coordination of efforts to identify critical habitats and living resources of the Minas Basin (i.e. encourage conservation of the Basin's diversity)."*

(Minas Basin Working Group, Strategic Plan. 2002)

2.2 Mission and Objectives of the Minas Basin Working Group

The Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership website (www.bofep.org) states the mission and the objectives of the Minas Basin Working Group.

The Working Group's mission is to maintain and enhance environmental quality in the Minas Basin and its watershed, and to allow for sustainable resource use by existing and future generations. Its objectives are:

- ◆ *to engage the public in identifying issues and actions pertaining to the sustainability of the Basin's resources and its coastal communities (i.e. encourage active community participation in all aspects of the working group's activities)*
- ◆ *to facilitate partnerships, collaboration and new funding opportunities among researchers, policy makers, resource managers and community groups pertaining to any aspect of the sustainable use and management of the Minas Basin*
- ◆ *to work towards a multistakeholder supported, management plan for the Minas Basin, taking into account its natural resources (living and non-living), the needs for conservation and protection, and Canada's long-term commitment to sustainable development*
- ◆ *to facilitate coordination of efforts to identify critical habitats and living resources of the Minas Basin (i.e. encourage conservation of the Basin's biodiversity)*
- ◆ *to identify habitats and species issues for future scientific investigation and research*
- ◆ *to enhance access to and interpretation of information on Minas Basin and its natural resources*

Membership on the Minas Basin Working Group remains open to all who agree with the principles of BOFEP and have an interest in the sustainable management of the Minas Basin.

<http://www.bofep.org/working.htm#Minas%20Basin%20Project>

2.3 Challenges

Community Groups

- ◆ Some groups are not ready to work on their action plans. This is a challenge because it was one of the coordinator's objectives for this contract. The group may not have the

resources, may not have the funding, or may simply not be ready to work on an action plan. For example, if a group is a newly formed group, they may not be ready to work on their action plans. In another example, the group may request assistance after the coordinator's contract period is finished, as in the case of the Citizens Action to Protect the Environment (CAPE). In this situation, the coordinator volunteered to assist the CAPE group in writing their action plan, however, in the future, requests like this may be made to the MBWG without a coordinator to assist the community group and ultimately groups not having assistance with action planning.

- ◆ Some groups want to work on specific action items without an action plan.
- ◆ Some groups are unaware of activities of other groups. This is improving with the website location for posting community meetings
- ◆ Groups are volunteers and therefore action items may or may not be completed from the last meeting.
- ◆ Most groups want to have an established relationship with the coordinator before committing to working with the individual (i.e. on writing an action plan. This is one reason, therefore, to fund a coordinator for a longer period of time.
- ◆ Groups are hesitant to work with an individual who is here today and gone tomorrow. This is another reason why a six month contract is not long enough to adequately assist community groups
- ◆ Groups have challenges to find funding for their organisations.
- ◆ Survival of community groups is limited by the lack of youth involvement to increase the membership and also to become the future board members of the group. Youth involvement is a must to the survival of the community groups.
- ◆ Some groups have a lack of members or a lack of board representatives that make it difficult to carry out routine business. This is a challenge because many of the groups elect new board members each year and sometimes members do not want to volunteer on the board.
- ◆ Groups think the MBWG could be more diligent in extending invitations to forums.
- ◆ Community group members realize the valuable contribution of many public servants; however, groups distrust the process of government and therefore results in groups not working with government officials on committees or at meetings. Most groups do not make distinctions between federal or provincial governments and definitely do not make distinctions between departments within government (i.e. habitat section of DFO).

Coordinator

- ◆ Through the coordinator's attendance at community group meetings, the Minas Basin Working Group (MBWG) supported community groups over the six month period of the contract however, for this initial relationship with community groups to continue, the MBWG has to be seen as actively supporting community groups beyond the six month contract period. If the coordinator continues working with community groups to ultimately develop their action plans, then having a visible presence at the community group meetings now and in the future is a necessity.
- ◆ The coordinator had to overcome the relationship that the Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership (BoFEP) / MBWG has to the Marine Biosphere Project – which groups are generally not in favour.
- ◆ The Minas Basin Integrated Management Plan for the watershed is a long term objective not a short term objective that requires a set, longer term time frame to work towards.

2.4 Recommendations

- ◆ Fund a longer term position to assist community groups to develop action plans for the Minas Basin Watershed and ultimately to develop an Integrated Management Plan for the Minas Basin.
- ◆ Create a fundraising committee which generates funds for all the BoFEP committees year round.
- ◆ Get better representation on the board by involving community groups as members of the MBWG. This could be facilitated by shortening the MBWG meeting times to a maximum of 3.5 hours and change meeting times to the afternoon. This might enable community groups to participate in the meetings of the Minas Basin Working Group.
- ◆ Continue to have a regular day each month when meetings are scheduled i.e. once a month on a set day every month. This allows for consistency in meeting times.
- ◆ The Minas Basin Working Group and the coordinator should partner with groups as often as possible. This involves partnering with groups for funding applications, restoration work, and in hosting meetings and conferences.
- ◆ Think broadly in the development of long term management plans for the watershed area that are sensitive to the activities and functions within the watershed.
- ◆ As the coordinator was doing, continue to take direction from the community groups and encourage, support, and assist them to write their action plans when ready.
- ◆ Continue making contacts with community groups and giving presentations on the objectives of the Minas Basin Working Group (public relations campaign).

- ◆ For 2004, if funding permits a continuation of this work, the coordinator should focus on agriculture and forestry groups that are impacting the marine resources of the Minas Basin Watershed.

2.5 Successful Outcomes

- ◆ Presented a 10 minute introduction on coordinator responsibilities to 22 groups located within the Minas Basin Watershed and explained how it ties into the objectives of the Minas Basin Working Group (MBWG).
- ◆ Follow up with requests for research or funding
 - Friends of Avon River – looked up information on causeway issue
 - Colchester Trails Association – upon request, provided EC Funding book to group
 - Cobequid Salmon Association – upon request, provided EC Funding Book to group
 - Central Nova Scotia Tourism Association – provided response to the question of request for the area that the Minas Basin entails
 - Farm Mentorship Program – brought suggestion forward to the MBWG and arranged meeting
- ◆ Linked similar groups together to work on projects
- ◆ Developed partnerships with community groups within the Minas Basin Watershed
- ◆ Developed positive and trusting relationship with groups - capacity building
- ◆ Provided guidance to groups on how to hold meetings and where to locate resources
- ◆ Portrayed the MBWG as a separate and distinct group from the Marine Biosphere Initiative
- ◆ Remained unbiased so as not to influence the group to do things in a particular way. Let the group develop naturally, without attempting to change or improve a group's decision. Part of the group's sustainable development is to attempt things with the possibility of success and failure.
- ◆ Inquired into having a website for posting community meetings. Thanks to Jon Percy this website is currently in place for community groups to post their meeting information or to check when other groups are having their meetings, workshops, and special functions.
- ◆ Researched and collected groups' mission and mandate statements.

2.6 Overall Status of groups

- ◆ Lack of adequate funding is a key issue with many groups.
- ◆ Maintaining the organization with board members, volunteers, and finances is a struggle each year.

3.0 DISCUSSION ON ACTION PLANNING

3.1 Introduction

Action planning includes: management plans, action plans, mission and mandate statements, and planning for seminars, panel discussions, and marine resource centre organisation. Upcoming seminars, panel discussions, management plans, and marine resource centre planning is discussed.

Groups involved in the protection, conservation, and sustainable use of the Minas Basin Watershed include: river, watershed, fish, habitat, wildlife, historical, geological, environmental, cultural, forestry, and agricultural groups. The coordinator introduced herself and the MBWG's objectives to community groups with the goal of working with community groups to develop their action plans. Action planning includes the following:

- ◆ Valley Watershed Stewardship Association / Kings Community - Water Seminar Planning
- ◆ Friends of Avon River - Panel Discussion Planning
- ◆ Colchester Trails Association Management Plan
- ◆ Marine Resource Centre Planning

Copies of management plans and mission statements that community groups had written before this contract with the Minas Basin Working Group are available in Appendix C of the full report of this document.

- ◆ Friends of Avon River (FAR)
- ◆ Valley Watershed Stewardship Association (VWSA)
- ◆ Avon River Watershed Coalition (ARWC)
- ◆ Wildlife Habitat Advocates (WHA)
- ◆ Marine Issues Committee, Ecology Action Centre (MIC of EAC)
- ◆ Municipality of the Town of Kings Volunteer Lake Monitoring Program
- ◆ NS Community Volunteer Initiative
- ◆ Kings Historical Society
- ◆ West Hants Historical Society (WHHS)
- ◆ Colchester Trails Association (CTA)
- ◆ Hants West Wildlife Associates (HWWA)
- ◆ Clean Annapolis River Project (CARP)
- ◆ Blomidon Naturalists Society (BNS)
- ◆ Hantsport and Area Historical Society (HAHS)
- ◆ Cobequid Salmon Association (CSA)
- ◆ Nova Forest Alliance (NFA)
- ◆ Citizens Action to Protect the Environment (CAPE)
- ◆ Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre (BF-MRC)
- ◆ Coastal Communities Initiative
- ◆ Shubenacadie Canal Commission

- ◆ Friends of Cornwallis River Society (FCRS)

Discussion follows on the outcomes of the action planning over the six month contract period. Successful outcomes, as well as challenges or areas for improvement, and next steps are discussed.

3.2 Successful Outcomes

1. Five groups have been identified that require assistance with their action plans including the Friends of Cornwallis River Society, Valley Watershed Stewardship Association, Colchester Trails Association, Parrsboro Groundfish Group, and the Planter 2010 group. This objective had a successful outcome because groups who require assistance from the MBWG have been identified, their actions have been documented, activities are known, and their issues have been made aware to the MBWG.
2. Four areas of action planning in the Minas Basin Watershed have been identified, initiated, and preparatory plans are in place including: Kings Community Water Seminar, Friends of Avon River Panel Discussion, Colchester Trails Association Five Year Management Plan, and the Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre Planning and Development.
3. The Colchester Trails Association took the coordinator's offer to have assistance with their management plan and their management plan is drafted.
4. Twenty - two action plans, mission, and mandates statements were collected and collated in Appendix C of the full report of this document.
5. The coordinator met with Steve Hawbolt on Oct 14, 2003 with the purpose of having Steve and the Clean Annapolis River Project (CARP) mentor the coordinator for this contract. The coordinator met with **CARP** - discussed mentorship program, management plans, 30% admin fee charged with all partnerships and funding requests, operating budget \$650,000 (\$90,000 per year in operating salaries and this is why they charge a 30% admin fee with all partnerships and funding requests). This group is well established and works on various causes to ensure the health of the Annapolis River and served as a valuable role model. This was a successful outcome because CARP acted as a mentor to the MBWG Coordinator to achieve the objectives for the contract.

3.3 Challenges or Areas for improvement

None of the community groups started and completed their action plans during the period of this six month contract. It is very difficult to complete the actions plans in a six month period when the coordinator and the groups are new to each other. Relationship building requires time and the group needs to be ready and capable of writing their management plans.

In fact, groups have different needs and wants depending on where they are in the development process. Some groups:

- ◆ Want to work on specific action items without an action plan.
- ◆ Have a lack of members or a lack of board representatives that make it difficult to do routine business. This is a challenge because many of the groups elect new board members each year and sometimes members may not want to volunteer on the board.
- ◆ Are not ready to work on their action plans. This was and is a challenge because it was one of the coordinator's objectives for this contract, however, the group may not have the human or material resources, may not have the funding, or may simply not be ready to work on an action plan. One example is if a group is a newly formed group; they may not be ready to work on their action plans.

One of the reasons that groups are not ready is that they do not have the finances or resources or they simply are not willing and would rather focus on a specific issue instead of doing a management plan (<http://www.coastalcommunities.ns.ca/summary-fundingmatters.pdf>).

In the initial plans, the coordinator had hoped to develop a management plan template however, due to lack of management plans completed by groups this is not possible. An alternative guide would be to use the Community Watershed Assessment Handbook available at http://www.chesapeakebay.net/pubs/watershed_assess/index.htm.

3.4 Next Steps

If the Minas Basin Working Group (MBWG) was in a position to apply for funding, receive the funding, and then administer the funding to the appropriate group in instalments to carry out its activities, this would certainly be advantageous to the community group. They would not have to find the volunteers and volunteer time to write the proposals. The MBWG would in fact partner with the community group to carry out its activities. One consideration is that the coordinator would have to be aware of the activities the community groups complete on a yearly basis and when the deadlines are to apply for the funding for community groups. Another consideration is that the group would have to write a report for how the money was utilized and submit it to the MBWG.

3.5 Potential groups to work on action plans include

- ◆ Friends of Cornwallis River
- ◆ Valley Watershed Stewardship Association
- ◆ Colchester Trails Association
- ◆ Parrsboro Groundfish Group
- ◆ Planter 2010 Group

3.6 Groups who do not require assistance with their action plans

- ◆ Blomidon Naturalist Society is a very active group with a number of members and activities offered throughout the year.

3.7 Completed Action Plans (Prior to Contract) are found in Appendix C (of the full report)

4.0 DISCUSSION ON WORKSHOP / MEETING ORGANISATION

4.1 Introduction

The following section discusses the workshop / meeting organisation objective over the six month contract period. Successful outcomes, challenges, and areas for improvement are discussed.

4.2 Successful outcomes

- ◆ Presented a 10 minute introduction on my responsibilities to 22 groups located within the Minas Basin Watershed and explained how they relate to the objectives of the MBWG and the community group.
- ◆ Linked similar groups together to work on projects.
- ◆ Developed partnerships with community groups within the Minas Basin Watershed.
- ◆ Developed positive and trusting relationship with groups with the ultimate goal of capacity building.
- ◆ Guided groups in their activities.
- ◆ Remained unbiased so as not to influence the group to do things in a particular way. Let the group develop naturally, without attempting to change or improve a group's decision. Part of the group's sustainable development is to attempt things with the possibility of success and failure.
- ◆ Made a website available for groups to post their information on community meetings.

4.3 Challenges

- ◆ Portrayed the MBWG as a separate and distinct group from the Marine Biosphere Initiative

4.4 Areas for Improvement / Next Steps

The Minas Basin Working Group (MBWG) must continue working with community groups. This involves meeting with community groups and completing tasks the groups want the coordinator to do. It may also involve making contacts for groups, researching information, and organising and chairing meetings as requested by the groups.

4.5 Summary of Workshops

The following workshops and meetings are discussed in Appendix B, *Management / Action Plans* of the full report including: Kings Community Water Seminar, Friends of Avon River Panel Discussion on the Avon River Causeway, the Colchester Trails Association Five Year Management Plan, and the Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centre Planning and Development.

The coordinator also participated in the *Global Program of Action Coalition* on the *State of the Environment of the Minas Basin* Coastal Forum which is discussed in this section.

4.6 Summary of Meetings

Meetings the coordinator attended are discussed in the *Community Group Action Planning Summaries* in Appendix A of the full report. Meetings where an introductory **presentation** was given took place with the following community groups in the Minas Basin Watershed from July 15, 2003 to January 15, 2004:

- ◆ Friends of Avon River (FAR)
- ◆ Valley Watershed Stewardship Association (VWSA)
- ◆ Friends of Cornwallis River Society (FCRS)
- ◆ Chateau Villager's Property Owner's Association
- ◆ Avon River Watershed Coalition (ARWC)
- ◆ NS Community Volunteer Initiative
- ◆ Cobequid Salmon Association (CSA)
- ◆ Kings Heritage Connection (KHC)
- ◆ West Hants Historical Society (WHHS)
- ◆ Hantsport and Area Historical Society (HAHS)
- ◆ Colchester Trails Association (CTA)
- ◆ Hants West Wildlife Associates (HWWA)
- ◆ North Grand Pre Community Group
- ◆ Citizens Action to Protect the Environment (CAPE)
- ◆ Bay of Fundy Marine Resource Centres
- ◆ Coastal Communities Initiative (CCI)
- ◆ Nova Scotia Salmon Association (NSSA)
- ◆ Nova Forest Alliance (NFA)
- ◆ Wildlife Habitat Advocates (WHA)
- ◆ Falmouth Watershed Committee (FWC)

4.7 Future Workshops and Meetings

Future scheduled meetings include the Avon River Watershed Coalition on February 17, 2004 and the Valley Watershed Stewardship Association on February 10, 2004.

The Rural Policy Forum: *Community Engagement in Policy Change and RCIP Project Annual General Meeting* will take place February 26 - 28, 2004 at AgriTech Park, Truro, NS.

Atlantic Canada Organic Regional Network (ACORN): Upcoming workshop – March 25 – 28th entitled **Growing Organic Opportunities:** 2004 Organic Agri - Food Conference and Trade Show to be held at the Howard Johnson Dutch Inn in Cornwall, PEI.

ACORN is working on an on-line input project, a marketing study, harvest fairs around the region, and planning for their 2004 conference.

4.8 Board Representation at Community Meetings

The coordinator actively participated in board representation with the Valley Watershed Stewardship Association and the Avon River Watershed Coalition. Future board representation with the Nova Scotia Community Volunteer Initiative is recommended.

4.9 Global Program of Action Coalition on the State of the Environment of the Minas Basin - Coastal Forum

The Minas Basin Working Group hosted the *Global Program of Action Coalition (GPAC) – Coastal Forum* at the Old Orchard Inn, in Wolfville on October 28, 2003. A summary of this report is available on the BoFEP website at <http://www.bofep.org/publications.htm>.

The Minas Basin Working Group Coordinator reviewed the final draft document and submitted comments to the GPAC Coastal Forum coordinator. The MBWG coordinator was the rappateur for the *Changes in Species* section of the GPAC Coastal Forum. After the forum, she typed and e-mailed the notes to Mark Tekamp to be included in the final document.

The MBWG coordinator contacted the Nova Forest Alliance and the Friends of the Cornwallis River Society to participate in the forum at Mark Tekamp's request. She arranged to borrow, pick up, and return 3 flip charts for the forum from Kings Community Economic Development Agency. The MBWG coordinator provided Mark Tekamp with BoFEP brochures and Technical Document # 2 for the GPAC Coastal Forum (for 15 people) as well as other background materials.

The MBWG coordinator provided contact information to Mark Tekamp and as a result, it was great to have a cross section of groups participating in the forum. Community groups participating as well as the MBWG included:

- ◆ Valley Watershed Stewardship Association
- ◆ Friends of Avon River
- ◆ Citizens Action to Protect the Environment
- ◆ Friends of the Cornwallis River Society
- ◆ Ecology Action Centre
- ◆ Nova Forest Alliance

5.0 DISCUSSION ON NETWORKING AND COMMUNICATION

5.1 Introduction

Discussion follows on the outcomes of the networking and communication objective over the six month contract period. Successful outcomes and next steps are discussed.

5.2 Successful Outcomes

- ◆ Wrote **introductory letter** and distributed to over 120 community groups and stakeholders within the Minas Basin Watershed. Gave the groups an opportunity to get in touch with the coordinator if they had anything the coordinator could assist them with. A copy of this letter is available in Appendix D, entitled *Networking and Communication*, of the full report
- ◆ Developed **presentation template**. The introductory presentation was presented to 22 groups within the Minas Basin Watershed utilizing the MBWG brochure and map of the Minas Basin Watershed area.
- ◆ Active **member** on **two** boards – Valley Watershed Stewardship Association and the Avon River Watershed Coalition.
- ◆ **Attended meetings** of groups where the coordinator gave an introductory presentation on responsibilities and objectives of the Minas Basin Working Group. This allowed community groups to put a face to a name and also to identify any areas that the coordinator could help them with. The meetings with community groups are discussed in detail under Appendix A of the full report, entitled *Community Group Action Plan Summaries*.
- ◆ Attended **meetings** of groups where the presentation was not given i.e. Blomidon Naturalist Society and the Parrsboro Groundfish Group. The Blomidon Naturalist Society was having elections at that time. The Parrsboro Groundfish Group was meeting to see if they needed to form a group however, the meeting was cancelled due to low attendance. Attending meetings allowed the coordinator to identify groups who do or do not require assistance with their action plans.
- ◆ Updated 2001 **database** of contact information for the Minas Basin Watershed for Nov 2003. It is a valuable tool that can be updated as the MBWG works with community groups. The coordinator suggests that the database be made available to Amanda Tree to up date as she makes contacts with representatives of the BoFEP / MBWG. Summary of the updated database information may be found in an excel table in Appendix D of the full report.

- ◆ Wrote **electronic logbook** of daily activities from July 15, 2003 through January 15, 2004 which may be used as a guide for future work with community groups. This logbook may be found in Appendix A of the full report.
- ◆ **Advertised** in the Kings County Volunteer Lake Monitoring newsletter and the BoFEP website. This is a good opportunity for the MBWG. If the MBWG knows when publication deadlines are, they may submit future updates, articles, and news worthy information to the community newsletter without having to spend any money. This is a good public relations tool and could be continued. A copy of the letter is available in Appendix D of the full report.
- ◆ Organised a website location for community groups to post their meeting dates (community@bofep.org). This allows groups to be able to see when other groups are having meetings or workshops and prevents groups from booking on the same days. Thanks to Jon Percy for the actual set up on the BoFEP website. This letter sent to community groups is located in Appendix D.

5.3 Challenges

Most groups want to have an established relationship with the coordinator before committing to working with the individual (i.e. on writing an action plan).

Groups are hesitant to work with an individual who is here today and gone tomorrow. The coordinator saw the six month contract length as a limiting factor to the long term development of successful networking and communication between the MBWG and community groups. The coordinator was in the unique position of working directly with community groups and the actions completed and the work initiated need to be guaranteed to be carried out in the future. This will facilitate continued trust and relationship building between the MBWG and the community groups within the Minas Basin Watershed Area. The coordinator was also limited by the time required to develop relationships with community groups and members of these community groups.

The coordinator had to overcome the relationship BoFEP / MBWG has to the Marine Biosphere Project – of which groups are generally not in favour. By having the Marine Biosphere Project on the BoFEP website and by saying the MBWG is neutral on this topic creates a dilemma. On one hand the coordinator is telling the community groups that the MBWG is neutral on this project and on the other hand, by having the information on the BoFEP website, this appears to suggest to community groups that the MBWG is in favour of the Marine Biosphere Initiative.

5.4 Next Steps

Continue responsibilities of networking and communication with community groups within the Minas Basin Watershed area with a specific focus on groups involved in fishery, rivers, water quality, and watershed management. A secondary focus could be working with agriculture and forestry groups impacting the marine resources of the Minas Basin.

6.0 DISCUSSION ON FUNDRAISING

6.1 Introduction

Discussion follows on the outcomes of the fundraising over the six month contract period. Successful outcomes, challenges, areas for improvement and next steps are discussed.

6.2 Successful Outcomes

The funding information obtained through research which will benefit future work. The fundraising table may be used as a reference guide for future funding deadlines.

- ◆ The coordinator created a **funding table** with deadlines to be used as a tool to track and facilitate funding efforts. The table includes funding proposal information and deadlines and is available in Appendix E of the full report.
- ◆ **Drafted and submitted to Knowledge Development Centre (KDC)** letter of intent on July 29, 2003. KDC declined to invite the MBWG to submit a full proposal and all members of the MBWG were informed at the Nov 4, 2003 MBWG meeting. All agencies who were asked to write letters of reference were informed with thanks however, the reference letter was no longer required.
- ◆ **Drafted letter** requesting funding from the **NS Department of Agriculture and Fisheries**. Informed at the November 4th MBWG meeting by Justin Huston that it is not likely that MBWG will receive funding for 2004 from NS Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.
- ◆ In partnership with the VWSA wrote **Water Seminar proposal** for the **Mountain Equipment Social and Environmental Responsibility Fund**.
- ◆ **Wrote funding letter** and submitted funding package to Scotia Investments Limited, High Liner Foods Incorporated, and Hennigar's Farm Market for private funding support. The funding package included: the MBWG brochure, funding letter, and business card to the following companies requesting a meeting to discuss funding possibilities:
 - ◆ Scotia Investments Limited (Mr. Elwood Dillman, original meeting scheduled on Dec 16, and then Jan 19, 2004 – in progress).
 - ◆ Hennigar's Farm Market (family) – declined at this time however, would like to have partnership and updates with the MBWG
 - ◆ High Liner Foods Incorporated (Mr. Henry E. Demone) – declined Dec 29, 2003 – funding support only for employees
- ◆ **The coordinator forwarded proposal information on the following applications**

Nova Forest Alliance Call for Proposals (due Jan 30, 2004)

- ◆ E-mailed information to Mike Brylinsky, Graham Daborn, and Reg Newell in December 2003

Environment Canada – Environmental Damages Fund sent info to

- ◆ Eastern Habitat Joint Venture (Reg Newell), Colchester Trails Association, Cobequid Salmon Association

Climate Change Program (hunting and harvesting) sent to

- ◆ Confederacy of [Mainland Mi'kmaq](#), [First Nations Forestry Association](#), [Millbrook First Nations](#), Ecology Action Centre's Marine Issues Committee, Dr Danika van Proosdij (St. Mary's University), Ducks Unlimited, Wildlife Habitat Advocates, Centre for Wildlife and Conservation, and the Atlantic Cooperative Wildlife Ecology Research Network.

EcoAction forwarded to

- ◆ Dr Danika van Proosdij (St. Mary's University)

Centre for Coastal Studies Internships (whales) forwarded to

- ◆ Dr. Tom Herman (Acadia University)

Fisheries Science Collaboration Program forwarded to

- ◆ Mike Brylinsky (Acadia University)

The **National Estuarine Research Reserve System** for 2004 class of **Graduate Research Fellows** info sent to:

- ◆ Mike Brylinsky (Acadia University)
- ◆ Dr Danika van Proosdij (St. Mary's University)

6.3 Challenges

Due to the challenges involved in fund raising, additional funding was not obtained to continue this position. At the November 4th, 2003 MBWG meeting where the MBWG was informed that (1) the Knowledge Development Centre, (2) DFO, and (3) NS Dept of Agriculture and Fisheries would not be funding the project, the coordinator's responsibilities changed to funding as the number one priority. Previous to this MBWG meeting, the coordinator's priorities in order of importance were (1) action planning, (2) meeting and workshop organisation, (3) networking and communication, and (4) fundraising.

In Katherine Scotts' *Funding Matters: The Impact of Canada's New Funding Regime on Non Profit and Voluntary Organisations Summary Report*, the report discusses some of the current funding trends:

- ◆ There has been a marked shift away from a core funding model, which funds organizations to pursue their mission. The new model is project-based and is characterized by contracts that give funders increase control over what the organization does and how it does it
- ◆ Funders are reluctant to fund administrative costs that cannot be directly tied to a project or a program.
- ◆ Funding is being provided for shorter periods of time, and is increasingly unpredictable.
- ◆ Reporting requirements have increased.
- ◆ Funders are increasingly requiring organizations to make joint submissions with project partners and to demonstrate that they have secured funding from other sources (financial or in-kind) contributions before extending their support.

(Scott, Katherine. Funding Matters: The Impact of Canada's New Funding Regime on Non Profit and Voluntary Organisations Summary Report. 2003.)

<http://www.coastalcommunities.ns.ca/summary-fundingmatters.pdf>

6.4 Areas for Improvement

The MBWG of BoFEP needs to have a subcommittee that works on funding proposals throughout the year. It would be preferable to have the Fundraising Subcommittee with representatives from all committees working towards funding all committees under the BoFEP umbrella. This committee would develop expertise in writing and funding proposals for all of the BoFEP initiatives.

6.5 Next Steps

The BoFEP committee should continue to update the funding table template with new funding calls as they become available, and delegate a group or individuals to write the proposals for the funding calls. Also the BoFEP committee could use the *Funding Table Past Deadlines for Future Use* available in Appendix E of the full report, as a guideline for upcoming funding proposals.

7.0 SUMMARY: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

The four focus areas for this project included: Action Planning, Meeting / Workshop Organisation, Networking and Communication, and Fundraising. Based on the work completed from July 15, 2003 to January 15, 2004, the coordinator has highlighted the following to assist in future efforts with community groups within the Minas Basin:

- ◆ Successful Outcomes
- ◆ Challenges
- ◆ Recommendations
- ◆ Future Focus
- ◆ Next Steps

7.2 Challenges

- ◆ Groups are volunteers and therefore action items may or may not be completed from the last meeting.
- ◆ Most groups want to have an established relationship with the coordinator before committing to working with the individual (i.e. on writing an action plan).
- ◆ Groups have challenges to find funding for their organisations.
- ◆ Groups think the MBWG could be more diligent in extending invitations to MBWG forums.
- ◆ Groups are hesitant to work with an individual who is here today and gone tomorrow. The coordinator was hired for a six month term with funding from the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The challenge is that groups think that the coordinator is just another face in many that they see come and go and therefore there is no stability and see the contract like a phase. A second challenge is that once the community group realizes the funding comes from a federal agency for the contract, the community groups thinks the federal government is trying to direct their activities.
- ◆ Coordinator had to overcome the relationship the BoFEP / MBWG has to the Marine Biosphere Project – which groups are generally not in favour.
- ◆ Most groups are unaware of activities of other groups. This is improving with the BoFEP website location to post community group information.
- ◆ Minas Basin Integrated Management Plan for the watershed is a long term objective not a short term objective that requires a set, longer term time frame to work towards.

- ◆ Group distrust of the process of government results in groups not working with government officials on committees or in meetings. Groups do not make distinctions between federal or provincial governments and definitely do not make distinctions between departments within government (i.e. habitat section of DFO).
- ◆ Survival of community groups is limited by the lack of youth involvement to grow the membership and also to be the future board members of the group. Youth involvement is a must to the survival of the community groups.

7.3 Recommendations

- ◆ Fund the Minas Basin Working Group Coordinator to work with community groups to continue to develop their action plans and ultimately to develop an Integrated Management Plan for the Minas Basin Watershed Area. Continue to actively support community groups. As the coordinator did in this contract, and what the Minas Basin Working Group should continue to do, is have a visible presence at the community group meetings.
- ◆ Become an Atlantic Coastal Action Program Site.
- ◆ Become a registered charity with a taxable number. Initiate the process of registering the Minas Basin Working Group or the Bay of Fundy Ecosystem Partnership as a non profit registered charity with a charitable tax number. This will improve and assist future potential for funding.
- ◆ Shorten MBWG meeting times to a maximum of 3.5 hours and change meeting times to the afternoon. This might enable community groups to participate in the meetings of the Minas Basin Working Group.
- ◆ Continue to have a regular day each month when meetings are scheduled i.e. once a month on a set day every month. This allows for consistency in meeting times.
- ◆ Get better representation on the board by involving community groups as members of the MBWG.
- ◆ Create a fundraising committee which generates funds for all the BoFEP committees year round.
- ◆ Partner with groups as often as possible.
- ◆ Think broadly in the development of long term management plans for the watershed area that are sensitive to the activities and functions within the watershed.
- ◆ As the coordinator did in this contract, the Minas Basin Working Group should continue to do, is to take direction from the community group and encourage, support, and assist them to write their action plans when ready.

7.4 Future Focus

The primary focus for the next year should be on working with watershed, fishery, and river groups in funding their projects and ultimately developing their action plans. Another secondary focus, however no less important, should be working with agriculture and forestry groups. In this six month contract, the coordinator has just begun the work with the agricultural and forestry sectors.

The coordinator envisions this position to be a continuation of the work that has been initiated. This means continue working on: the Water Seminar, the Panel Discussion, and Marine Resource Centre Planning and Development. Continue to work with groups in collecting information on their mission and mandates with the ultimate goal of working with community groups to develop their action plans. The long term goal is the development of the Integrated Minas Basin Watershed Management Plan. Set a deadline towards this ultimate goal for example 10 to 15 years. Continue to link groups together to work on similar projects, gain experience, eliminate competition and develop cooperation (coopetition) among groups and the MBWG. Continue to present and meet with community groups within the Minas Basin. Continue to network, communicate, and develop trusting relationships with community groups. Continue to work on fundraising to fund MBWG activities as well as other community group activities.

7.5 Next Steps

Work with those community groups that are identifying and will identify themselves as community groups that need assistance with their management plans. Key actions include developing a fundraising committee that funds all the BoFEP activities. A second key action would be to develop a one page 5 year action plan with immediate, short term, and long term objectives which are reviewed annually. These one page action plans would list the actions and assigned person to carry out these actions. This will give direction to the MBWG and consistency over time to achieve the long term objective of developing and implementing an Integrated Minas Basin Watershed Management Plan. Assigning a person to carry out the actions makes the individuals accountable for the plan and therefore, it is with greater probability that the desired results will be achieved and then implemented: Integrated Minas Basin Watershed Management Plan.

Along with developing these action plans for the specified years, consideration of implementation has to be done throughout the process. Implementation is just as important as writing the plan and is an integral component of the plan. It is great to have a management plan however, if there is no method for implementation, which includes community support, then it may be very difficult to actually put the plan into action.

- ◆ Continue to maintain representation on boards i.e. Valley Watershed Stewardship Association, Avon River Watershed Coalition and other coalitions or collaborations of boards.
- ◆ Maintain and enhance the database by having the MBWG coordinator continue to update the database as contacts are made or revised (with individuals or boards of community groups) or delegate this responsibility to the Administration person for BoFEP.

- ◆ Continue to work on Community Groups' Action Planning for the Minas Basin Watershed.
- ◆ Continue networking and communication with community groups.
- ◆ Continue to work with the Valley Watershed Stewardship Association towards a Water Seminar in 2004.
- ◆ Continue to work with the Friends of the Avon River, Municipality of Hantsport, and Municipality of Windsor to host a Panel Discussion on the issues surrounding the Avon River.
- ◆ Continue to follow up with groups' requests for information or support.
- ◆ Set a 5 year plan that is reviewed annually and that has short, intermediate, and long term goals and objectives.
- ◆ Future board representation with the Nova Scotia Community Volunteer Initiative and Rural Communities Impacting Policy is recommended to facilitate partnerships and eliminate duplication of services.

8.0 REFERENCES

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